

## PRESS RELEASE

Visit us on Facebook or Twitter.



**For Immediate Release:**  
Wednesday, April 29, 2015

**Contact:**  
Kyle Collins 478.232.3331

### *Working for Better Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Operations ...* **Road Safety Audit Visits Downtown Milledgeville**

**MILLEDGEVILLE** – The Georgia Department of Transportation, along with Gresham Smith and Partners, organized a downtown Milledgeville Road Safety Audit (RSA) Tuesday, April 14 and Wednesday, April 15, as part of the Department's effort to improve safety. The gathering, hosted by Georgia College, brought together representatives from the City of Milledgeville, Georgia Military College (GMC) and Live Healthy Baldwin, among others. These individuals visited downtown Milledgeville for a formal safety performance examination of key local and state route intersections to identify potential solutions. The result of the RSA was the identification of short-term, intermediate and long-term solutions, which the Georgia DOT will consider in cooperation with both the local city government and vested community partners.

Audit focus areas included:

- State Route 49/Hancock Street from Columbia Street to SR 22/N. Elbert Street;
- State Route 22/Montgomery Street from US 441 BUS/SR 243/Clarke Street to Wayne Street;
- State Route 112 S. Elbert Street from Hancock Street to Franklin Street;
- US 441 BUS/SR 243/Clarke Street from Montgomery Street to Franklin Street;
- US 441 BUS/SR 243/Franklin Street from Clark Street to Wayne Street;

RSA participants utilized both a day and night field inspection of pedestrian facilities, traffic flow and traffic control devices in the chosen locations. Kedrick Collins, District Traffic Engineer for the Georgia DOT, called for the study because the downtown area features a wide variety of users.

Downtown Milledgeville faces a unique situation considering two higher education institutions and a bustling business district all rest amongst multiple state routes. The student and faculty population generate considerable pedestrian activity while the routes handle a steady mix of family and commercial vehicles. It is a challenge to coordinate pedestrian movements and traffic operations. Collins provided some historical perspective of pedestrian concerns in this focus area.

“For over 20 plus years, pedestrian concerns in the Milledgeville area have been addressed on an individual basis without any regard as to how it may or may not affect the surrounding area. These individualized evaluations have led to inconsistent treatment of similar pedestrian crossings, and it has led to the entire area being completely inundated with pedestrian crossings,” Collins said.

General issues discovered by the multi-disciplinary team included poor visibility for both pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists navigating the area, the lack of sign uniformity and inappropriate striping and other markings. Operational issues on crosswalks like the SR 22 (Montgomery Street), SR 243 (Clarke Street) and the SR 49 (Hancock Street) crossings to-and-from Georgia College became the center of conversation. Collins explained that in most instances, driver frustration is leading to non-compliance. The lack of coordination between signals and these crosswalks often affects the proper function of the intersection and motorists are not able to maximize the green phase time, causing vehicles to back-up at high-flow pedestrian crossings.

Separation between vehicle movements and pedestrians could prove to be vital in solving the pedestrian issues in the downtown area, Collins said.

## PRESS RELEASE

Visit us on Facebook or Twitter.



Alternative treatments such as a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons, Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB) (also known as the High intensity Activated crossWalk (or HAWK)) signal and Exclusive PED Phasing at existing signalized intersections would insure total priority for either pedestrians or vehicles without mixing the two.

“I really want to be consistent,” Collins said during the final thoughts portion on the RSA. “We need to be strategic and on point with the pedestrian provisions we put out there in order to get the biggest bang for our buck.”

The State Route 112 (S. Elbert Street) area cutting through GMC is another area that often presents challenges for handling pedestrian movements and traffic volumes. Visibility and speed creates a potential hazard. The RSA brainstorm settled on a “road diet” treatment option that would reduce the number of travel lanes in the GMC area to achieve systemic operational improvements. A road diet opens the possibility for median crossing refuge islands at Greene Street and Franklin Street that bookend the school.

The Georgia DOT always searches for better and safer roadway operations. A final report including recommendations for improvements and further action will be returned to the Department and RSA participants by early June. The District Traffic Engineer feels optimistic about the RSA’s results.

“My hope and desires for the Road Safety Audit is to perform a holistic evaluation of the pedestrian crossings in downtown Milledgeville that involves as many stakeholders as possible to create a shared expectation between motorists and pedestrians at well-established crossings,” Collins said. “Achieving such a goal, I believe will ensure the safest and most efficient travels for pedestrians and motorists for this region.”

*The Georgia Department of Transportation is committed to providing a safe, seamless and sustainable transportation system that supports Georgia’s economy and is sensitive to both its citizens and its environment. For more information on Georgia DOT, please visit [www.dot.ga.gov](http://www.dot.ga.gov) or subscribe to our Press Release [RSS feed](#). You also may follow us on ([www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT](http://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT)) and [Twitter](http://twitter.com/GDOTEastTraffic) (<http://twitter.com/GDOTEastTraffic>).*

**Attached photos: The Georgia Department of Transportation visited Milledgeville April 14 and 15 to complete a Road Safety Audit of the downtown area. Findings will be delivered to Georgia DOT by early June for possible implementation in conjunction with local partners.**

###